

May The Work I've Done Speak For Me



Deidra Ann Johnson

July 27, 1948 – July 12, 2011

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Memorial Service

Friday, July 22, 2011
11:00 a.m.

Chapel of the Chimes

4499 Piedmont Ave
Oakland, CA 94511

Repass

Chapel of the Chimes
directly following the Service

The family deeply appreciates your kind expressions of love and for spending this time with us. May God continually bless you richly, in Jesus name.

Thank you for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers.

Order of Service

Prelude

May The Work I've Done Speak For Me

Processional

Welcome

Marsha Dyke

Solo- Precious Lord

Renee Charles

Poem

Timiza Wagner

Student Memories & Tributes

Shawn Cook & Alexander Sing

Deidra's Life

Vera Franklin

Eulogy

Pastor Lorraine McNeal

Downs Memorial United Methodist Church

Solo- Amazing Grace

Wendell Brooks

Benediction

Pastor Lorraine McNeal

Repass

You are invited to fellowship with the family in the "New Reception Room" immediately following the service



Deidra Ann Johnson

July 27, 1948 – July 12, 2011

Deidra, who was affectionately called Dee by her loved ones, was a native Californian and a lifelong resident of Berkeley. After graduating from Berkeley High school, she married her high school sweetheart Bruce Johnson, and entered the University of California at Berkeley where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Sociology. While enrolled in Berkeley, she embarked upon a life transforming trip to the west coast of Africa including Nigeria and Ghana, which broadened her perspective and affirmed her pride in her heritage. Deidra began her highly inspiring career as a teacher, with Berkeley preschool students. She continued her career in the Berkeley Unified School District, as a middle school English and History teacher at Willard Junior High School. Deidra demonstrated leadership there by serving as a mentor to teachers on site and in other schools, as a part of Willard's State Demonstration School in English. Her endeavors eventually led her to return to her high school alma mater, where she taught English. She later became the Head Counselor there. Naturally gifted at motivating young people to reach their fullest potential, Deidra was a passionate and talented educator. In her role as Head Counselor she guided hundreds of students to productive life paths, including many she would assist to achieve their college dreams. Her profound respect for the power of knowledge, along with her commitment to young people, led her to obtain two additional college degrees: a Master's degree in Education Administration from San Francisco State University, and a Master's degree in Counseling from Hayward State University.

Deidra's dedication to students went far beyond teaching and guidance counseling. She volunteered for many extracurricular activities. Deidra coordinated the University College Opportunity (UCO) program at Willard, which was a program designed to prepare students of color for college. As the Head of Berkeley High School's Key Club, she led students in many community activities including an annual toy drive and Christmas in April, a home improvement project which benefitted senior citizens. She also coordinated the annual Winter Ball.

The greatest role of Deidra's life was motherhood and her only child Eric, was the highlight of her life. A highly devoted and fun-spirited mother, Deidra embraced motherhood with delight and immeasurable enthusiasm. Eric and Deidra enjoyed many family activities such as going to Disneyland, and traveling to the Caribbean. Eric felt that his mother was his best friend. Family was a core value for Deidra and she was a highly loyal daughter, sister and aunt. Deidra was regarded as the glue of her family. She had a true party spirit and organized all family festivities, from birthday parties to Fourth of July bar-b-ques.

Deidra was also a strong humanitarian who looked out for the well-being of others less fortunate. She made regular contributions to the Richmond Rescue Mission and delivered food baskets to those in need, for many years. She also belonged to several organizations including Eastern Star and was one of the founding members of the Black Sophisticates, a social club based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Deidra left this Earth on July 12th 2011, following a long struggle with complications from diabetes. She was the daughter of Thomas and Della Stillwell. She was the second oldest of Della's four children, which include Lola, Randy and Kimberly. She is survived by her mother, three siblings, her son Eric and nephew Jaquell. She also leaves behind extended family members including her Great Aunt Ann, Aunts: Menta, Dora, May, Gladys and Vert; Uncles: Alvin and Melvin; many cousins; nephews: Joe, Jimmy and Jeffrey; niece: Emma and many other relatives in Dayton Ohio and California.





Tributes

"Mrs. J. was one of the best at BHS:"

Abdul Jacobs

"Eric, your mom introduced us...did so much for many people on Facebook as a matter of fact...I don't know what to say, I'm shocked! My heart goes out to your family. She will be missed."

Jennifer Foreman

"R.I.P. to the greatest English teacher at BHS. Ms. Johnson. I had her for AP English. She was an excellent teacher and an inspiration."

Yolanda Allen

"Big ups to you Mrs. J. for captivating, keeping and peaking our interest in books like , The Bluest Eye and Sula, Now that's a legacy!"

Lia Turner

"I was thinking about you all day. I couldn't even go to work but I know your mom is in GOD's hand and I could not forget how loving she was to all of us, rip."

Tayvon Zeleke

"May God continue to give you the strength and grace to go through. Your mom pushed me beyond what I thought I could do and remained a role model, mentor and most of all a friend. Her legacy will live on in the thousands of lives that she impacted"

Saphronia R. Wallace

"Your mother had an influence on me (and a great many others) that still lives on today. She was the first English teacher I had that actually made me WANT to read...and she's the reason you'll never (ever!) hear me say 'hissself'. Take comfort in knowing that she is in a much better place than us right now"

Gari Lyn Monroe

"Your mother was an awesome example of a strong black woman. Just know of the difference she made in so many peoples lives."

Marsha Evans

"Please know that you and your Mom ARE truly loved! And gave love to SO many"

Ellure Ja'tie

"She was a wonderful educator and mother figure. I am truly blessed to know you and her while growing up in Berkeley."

My Washington

"Your Mom was one of my favorite teachers and she has left a long lasting image on my life"

Nikki Baker

Tributes

"She was a beautiful lady I enjoyed those times when we went to the movies and out to dinner together. You was a wonderful and good son to your mom"

Christopher Teague Chatmon

"She was, by far, the best English Teacher

Shamonica Clark

"She was a strong, beautiful and passionate woman and educator...and was a influential part of my adolescence and education. I am thankful that I knew her."

Shaina Pomerantz

"

Your mother was such a nice, knowledgeable and caring woman. She was a blessing to many students at Berkeley High."

Ray Stultz

"May she be where the good English teachers go—to the heaven where there are no papers to correct."

Judy Juanita

"When you miss her most...just look in the mirror...She is FOREVER a part of you...If it helps at all, KNOW that she is at peace...More than anything else, I remember how proud she was of you...nothing like a mother's smile"

Anastacia Motem

"I am really sorry to hear that, I really enjoyed her class and as a teacher myself, I recognize that a lot of it had to do with her ability to motivate me to make the class content a part of my 'real' life. I still remember an assignment that was some kin of ongoing literary scavenger hunt where you had to indentify books being referenced in a very long list of clues, that list influenced me to read a lot of books as a young adult, many of which were amazing works of African-American literature (fiction and non-fiction) that no teacher or professor had ever assigned me to read, though they really should have."

Jesse Isaacs

